



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the “Elections” in Georgia's Abkhazia Region

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 8, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States supports Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and is committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Georgia's Abkhazia region within Georgia's internationally-recognized borders. We do not recognize the so-called "elections" organized on February 11 and March 4 by Abkhaz de facto authorities. By raising political tensions between the sides, these elections detract from international efforts to achieve a just and lasting settlement of the Abkhazia conflict.

These so-called "elections" only help underscore the plight of more than 200,000 persons displaced by the conflict. Most remain unable to exercise their right, affirmed in numerous resolutions of the UN Security Council, to return to their homes throughout Abkhazia following ethnic cleansing during the armed conflict in the mid-1990s. Most of those who have returned have suffered other human rights violations, which undermine the evolution of democracy. We call on those authorities to respect the rights of those who have returned and adhere to measures that would allow the return of all displaced persons in Abkhazia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.